



Membership Data Report

2019–2020
Fiscal Year

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Introduction

Established under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, the College of Early Childhood Educators (the “College”) is one of the largest self-regulatory bodies and the first professional college for early childhood educators in Canada. The College’s mandate is to regulate the profession in the public interest.

The Annual Membership Data Report provides a comprehensive review of the registration and membership trends throughout the College’s fiscal year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020). The report examines incoming applications, membership trends and insights into the profession, such as employment and attrition. The report also presents an overview of the membership demographics and geographic distribution that make up the early childhood profession in Ontario.

The COVID-19 Pandemic

In March 2020, the Ontario government announced measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. Such measures included strict social restrictions and closures of certain businesses across the province. Several announcements were made which progressively affected Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), beginning with:

- **March 12:** All publicly funded schools in Ontario close for two weeks following March Break;
- **March 17:** Ontario officially declares a State of Emergency and orders additional closures which include all recreational programs and libraries, private schools and child care programs;
- **March 22:** Ontario government announces select child care locations to open to provide emergency child care;
- **March 31:** The province also announces that schools will remain closed until at least May 2020; and,
- **April 14:** Ontario extends the State of Emergency.

As part of the March 17 announcement, all licensed child care centres were legally closed under the declaration of emergency. While home child care was not subject to the same closure order, many home child care programs elected to close. The Ministry of Education worked in partnership with service system managers, Indigenous peoples and other Ontario Ministries to open select emergency child care centres in order to support healthcare and other frontline workers. Select centres allowed to open were required to adhere to strict measures and criteria, including limiting the number of people, including children, to a maximum of 50 in the location at one time and not permitting entrance to any visitors.

In April 2020, the provincial government released their framework for a three-phased approach to reopening Ontario’s economy. The first stages of the reopening process started on May 4 when some seasonal businesses were allowed to open with precautions in place. The second stage of reopening began on June 12 and included child care programs that demonstrated they could meet the health and safety protocols established in the Ministry’s operational guidance. Protocols included creating a COVID-19 response plan in the event of exposure to the illness, reduced cohort sizes, use of personal protective equipment for staff, physical distancing, daily screening for symptoms and thorough cleanings of the centre throughout each day.

Starting in March, the College heard how these unprecedented and uncertain times were creating increased pressure, challenges and stress for RECEs. In response, the College introduced several temporary changes in order to support applicants and members through the pandemic. These measures included:

- halting notifications of intentions to suspend and membership suspensions for non-payment of fees;
- waiving the late fee on membership renewals;
- allowing members to request a deferral of their membership fees for up to three months, without penalty;
- providing members a one-year deferral of meeting Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements;
- postponing the CPL audit and compliance processes;
- amending the official transcript submission process for post-secondary institutions to provide transcripts electronically;
- providing applicants undergoing the individual assessment process an extension to submit required documents; and,
- engaging with post-secondary institutions to recognize alternatives to the student practicum.

Because of the timing of the pandemic and the introduction of these temporary measures, the data contained in this report will not be comparable to previous years and cannot be used to generate conclusions about changes and trends in the profession. As Ontario continues to adjust and respond to the pandemic situation, the College will continuously review and evaluate the need for these or other temporary measures, which will continue to affect the application and membership data contained in subsequent report(s).

Applications

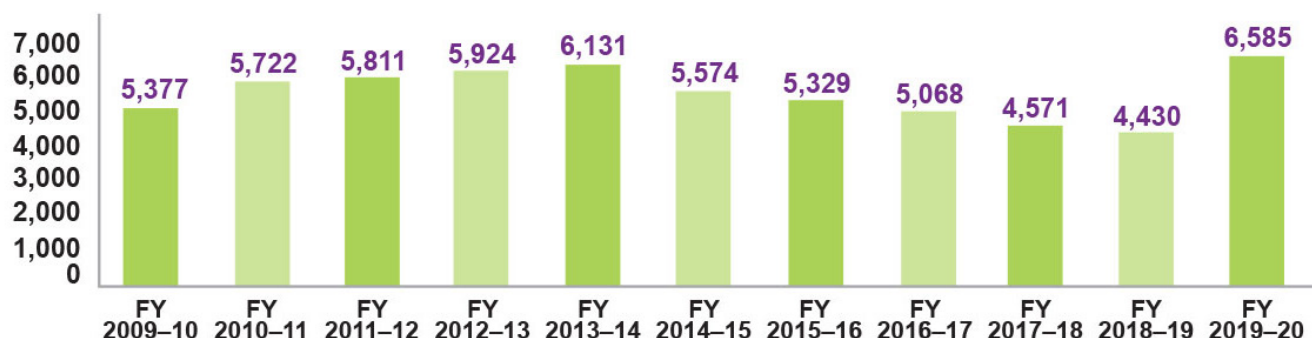
The College assesses applications based on the requirements set out in the Registration Regulation of the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*. Applicants must successfully demonstrate they meet all requirements in order to be issued a Certificate of Registration with the College, enabling them to practise within the profession.

Successful completion of the educational requirement for registration with the College can be met in a number of ways, including:

1. A Diploma in Early Childhood Education (ECE) from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT);
2. A diploma or degree that is assessed by the College as equivalent to a Diploma in ECE offered by an OCAAT;
3. A letter-of-equivalency certificate or a recognition-of-equivalency certificate issued by the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario or the Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario;
4. A licence or certificate granted by a regulatory authority of another Canadian province or territory that is considered a match to the Certificate of Registration issued by the College for the purpose of the *Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)*; and,
5. A diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution or a combination of a diploma or degree from a post-secondary institution and experience which is equivalent to an Early Childhood Education diploma program from an OCAAT.

In the 2019–2020 fiscal year, the College saw a significant increase in the volume of applications over previous years, with a 48.6 per cent increase over the previous year and an overall 21.9 per cent increase over the average volume.¹ Over the last ten years, this increase accounts for the largest volume of applications received in a fiscal year.

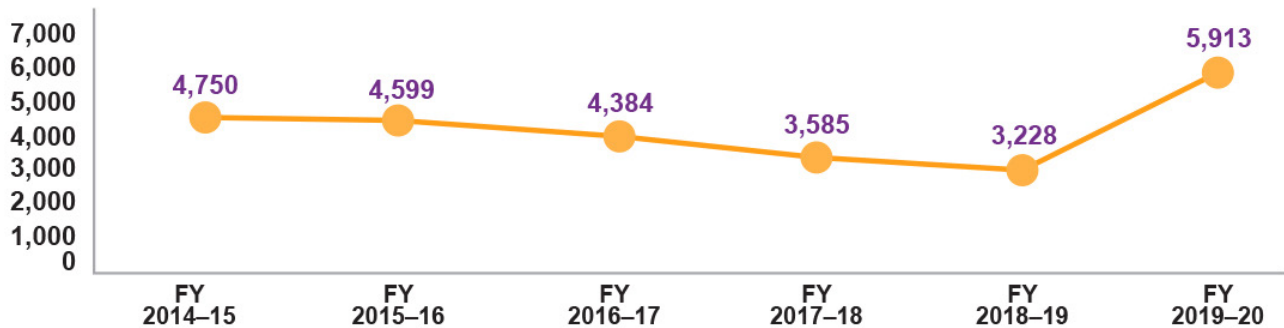
Total New Applications Per Fiscal Year



¹ This value was determined by calculating the average of total applications received by the College between the 2009–10 and 2018–19 fiscal years, then conducting a percentage change between the 2019–20 fiscal year and the average volume.

The vast majority of applications received by the College (84.7 per cent) continue to be from graduates of an ECE diploma program delivered by an OCAAT. The 2019–2020 fiscal year saw an 83 per cent increase in the number of OCAAT applications received compared to the previous year, and a 37.5 per cent rise over the average volume received in previous years. The College is not aware of external factors likely to have caused the increase in applications but will continue to monitor to determine if this is a sustained trend.

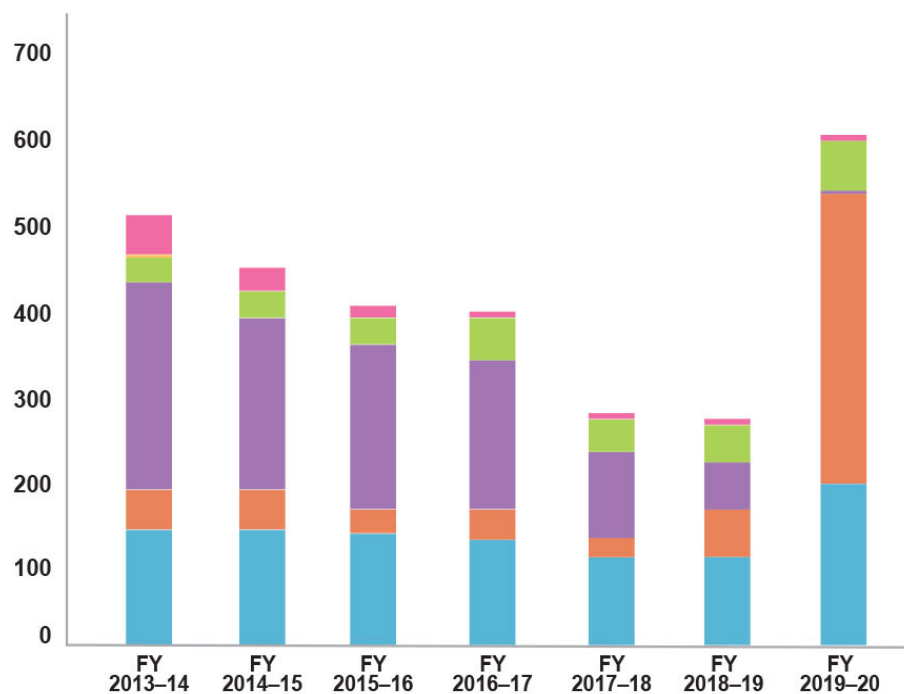
Total Member Applications from OCAAT Diploma Programs



The College currently has data-sharing agreements with all programs approved under the College’s *Approval of Education Programs* Policy that provide insight into future membership, with progress being made towards formal information sharing with OCAATs delivering ECE programs. Creating similar agreements with OCAATs would provide the College with the opportunity to identify trends to support better operational planning and enable further comparison between programs that lead individuals to pursue College membership.

As listed earlier, applicants can meet the education requirement in a number of ways outside of obtaining an ECE diploma offered by an OCAAT. Applications from individuals with these alternative educational qualifications continue to account for approximately ten per cent of all applications received by the College. Compared to the previous year, 2019–20 saw a significant increase of 137.4 per cent in the volume of applications received from individuals with alternative educational qualifications. Most notably, the College saw the largest increase in the volume of applications received from graduates of approved programs.

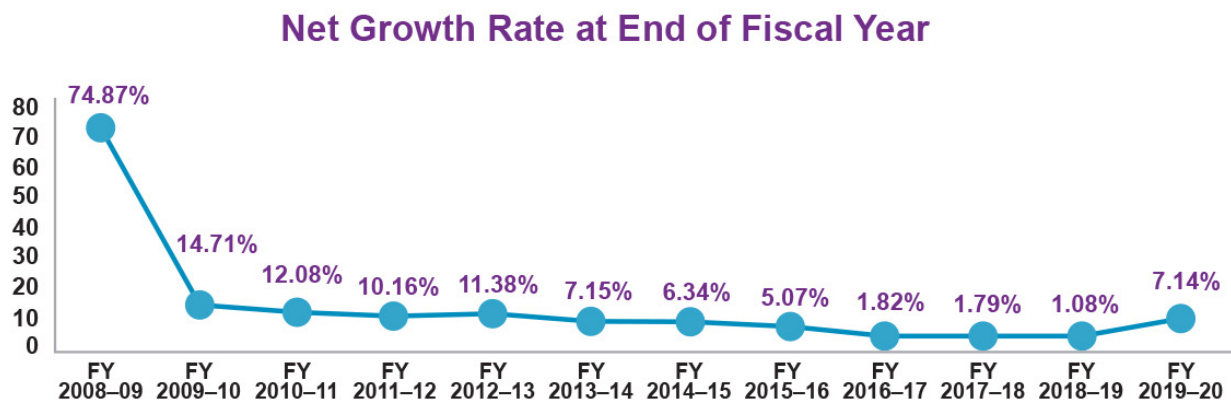
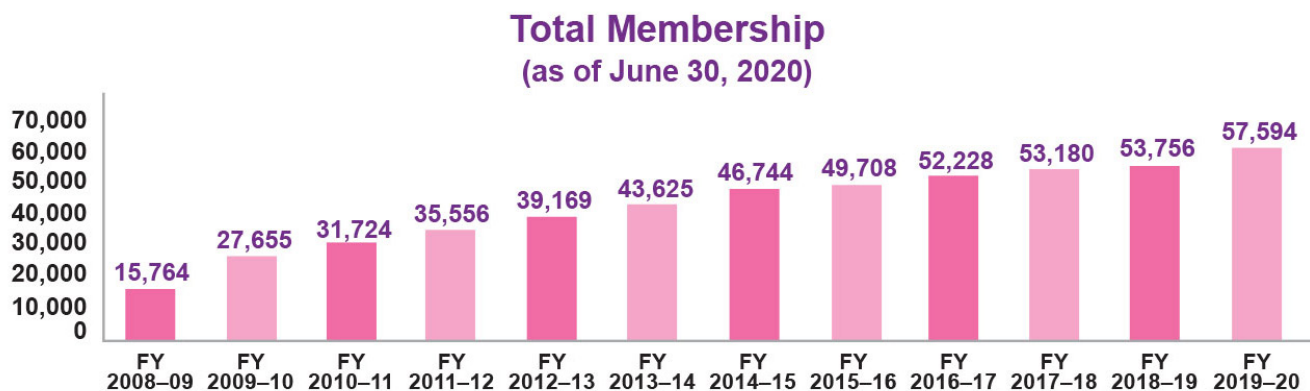
Total Member Applications with Alternative Educational Qualifications (excluding OCAAT Diploma Programs)



- Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO)
- Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (Aféseo)
- Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)
- Canadian trained (non AIT)
- Approved program
- Internationally trained

Membership

The College experienced considerable growth in membership over the year, with the total number of members in good standing reaching 57,594. This accounts for a 7.14 per cent net growth rate over the previous year, a notable change from the decreasing net growth rate observed in the previous six fiscal years.²

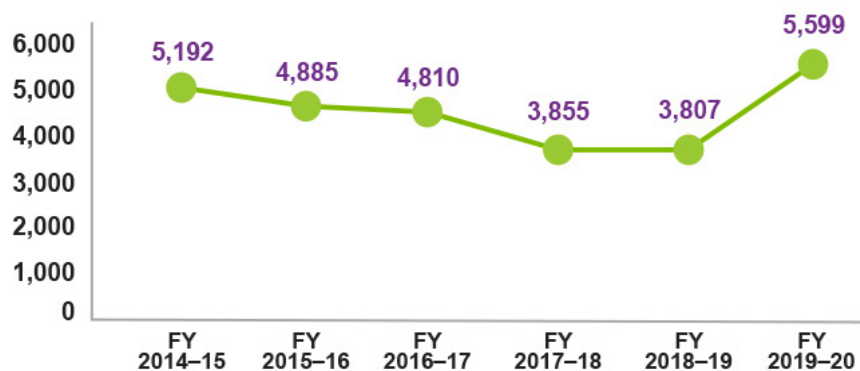


² As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the introduction of temporary measures by the College, including offering deferrals of membership and halting the suspension process, the data cannot be used to generate conclusions about changes and trends in the profession.

New Membership

The College observed a significant increase in the number of new members, as indicated with the increased volume of applications. There was a 47 per cent increase over the previous year, and a 12.7 per cent increase over the average. This higher volume of new members is one factor that contributed to the College's overall increase in net growth in the 2019–20 fiscal year.

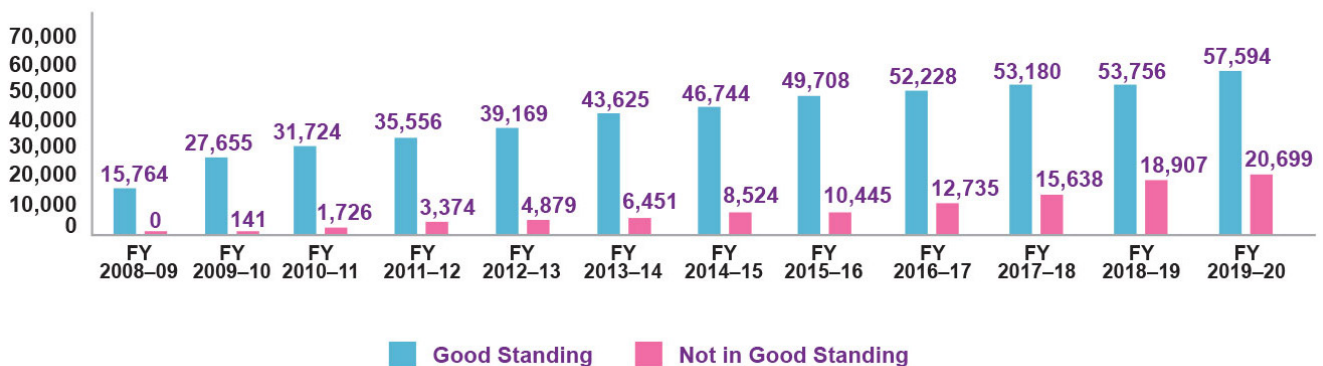
New Members Per Fiscal Year



Membership Attrition

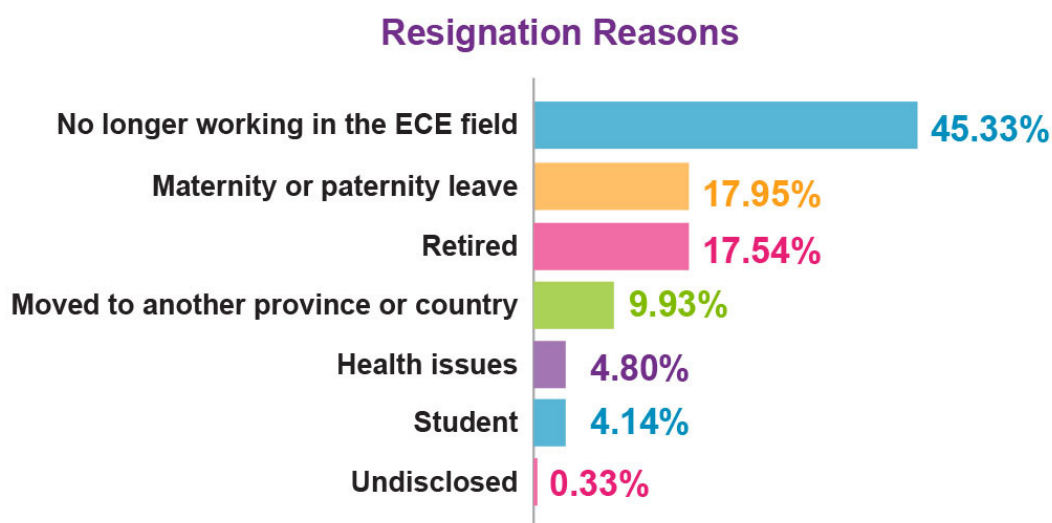
Members are considered no longer in good standing when their Certificates of Registration have either been suspended, expired, cancelled/resigned or revoked. Of the more than 75,000 Certificates of Registration issued by the College since its inception, 26 per cent belong to former members who are no longer in good standing.

Membership in Good Standing vs. Those Not in Good Standing



The College saw a decline in the overall number of membership resignations in this fiscal year (1,264), accounting for a 13.7 per cent decrease from the previous year – another contributing factor in the College’s increase in net growth. As might be expected, the College observed a rise in resignations during the month of March timed with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in an increase of 29 per cent over March 2019. As well, membership resignations continued to decline between April and June by more than 30 per cent over the same period in an average year. This decline may be correlated to the College’s decision to temporarily halt suspensions and the suspension notification process, which may have acted as a reminder to members to resign their membership before being suspended. The average age range of members resigning was 35-44 years old; members aged 18-24 years accounted for only one per cent of all resignations in the fiscal year.

In line with previous years, the predominant reason members provided for their resignation was that they are no longer working in the field, accounting for almost half of the resignations. This reason is followed by maternity/paternity leave and then closely followed by retirement.



Of those members whose Certificate is no longer in good standing, approximately 30 per cent are suspended. Members may have their Certificates of Registration suspended for a number of reasons, including:

- Failure to provide information required by the College in relation to their annual membership renewal or their Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) portfolio;
- Failure to provide payment for annual membership renewal; and,
- Conduct-related matters.

The 2019–2020 fiscal year saw a decline in the number of membership suspensions (1,612) decreasing by an overall 31 per cent over the previous year. The College temporarily halted the suspension process in March in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking into account this period with no active suspensions, a comparison of the active suspension period (i.e., 1,591 suspensions between July 2019 and February 2020) highlights an approximate five per cent decline in suspensions over the same timeframe in the previous fiscal year.

Former Members

Members who have resigned or have been suspended can generally reinstate their membership once they have provided the College with the requested information and/or payment. The College observed a significant increase in the number of reinstatement requests received, rising by 56 per cent over the previous year. The majority of former members who chose to reinstate did so after having their Certificates of Registration suspended for administrative reasons (i.e., failure to provide information and/or payment of fees), accounting for more than 80 per cent of reinstatements. Almost 15 per cent of former members reinstated from a resigned status, returning, on average, 1.4 years after resigning from the College.

Members who remain suspended for three consecutive years without reinstating have their Certificates of Registration revoked. The 2019–2020 fiscal saw a significant increase in the number of revocations, growing by 42 per cent. This was the highest volume of revocations in the College's history, which is ten per cent higher than the previous highest period in 2017–2018. This increase coincides with an increase in suspensions which occurred in the 2016–2017 fiscal year and is projected to continue based on the volume of suspensions observed by the College in the 2017–2018 fiscal year.

Individuals whose Certificates of Registration have been revoked cannot be reinstated; they must re-apply to the College if they wish to hold their Certificate of Registration. This year, the College continued to see a decline in the number of former members re-applying, a decrease of ten per cent over the previous year. The 2018–2019 fiscal year was initially considered a data outlier in relation to re-application, as it saw the largest drop in the College's history (<90 per cent).

Membership Demographics

The College did not see significant changes in membership demographics compared to the previous fiscal year. The membership overall continues to identify as predominantly English-speaking women and continues to remain closely aligned with sectoral demographics.³

The Ontario government's labour market reports provide insight into the sector, including regional and demographic trends, as well as industry statistics in order to assist individuals and organizations in assessing work trends and identifying the skills, education and training needed for current and future employment.

An important note: the labour market outlook is based on projections released prior to February 2020, and therefore, do not reflect labour market developments as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has resulted in exceptional labour market disruptions which have not been reflected in the data collected by the provincial government.

The Ontario Labour Market information for the early years' sector is assessed under the National Occupational Code (NOC) 4214, which represents Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Assistants, as well as their supervisors. This broad definition encompasses sectoral workers who do not fall under the College's regulatory purview. The next section provides a comparison of the College's membership to the sectoral demographics reported in Ontario's labour market job profiles.

Membership by Gender



98%
Female



2%
Male

Sectoral Demographics by Gender



97%
Female



3%
Male

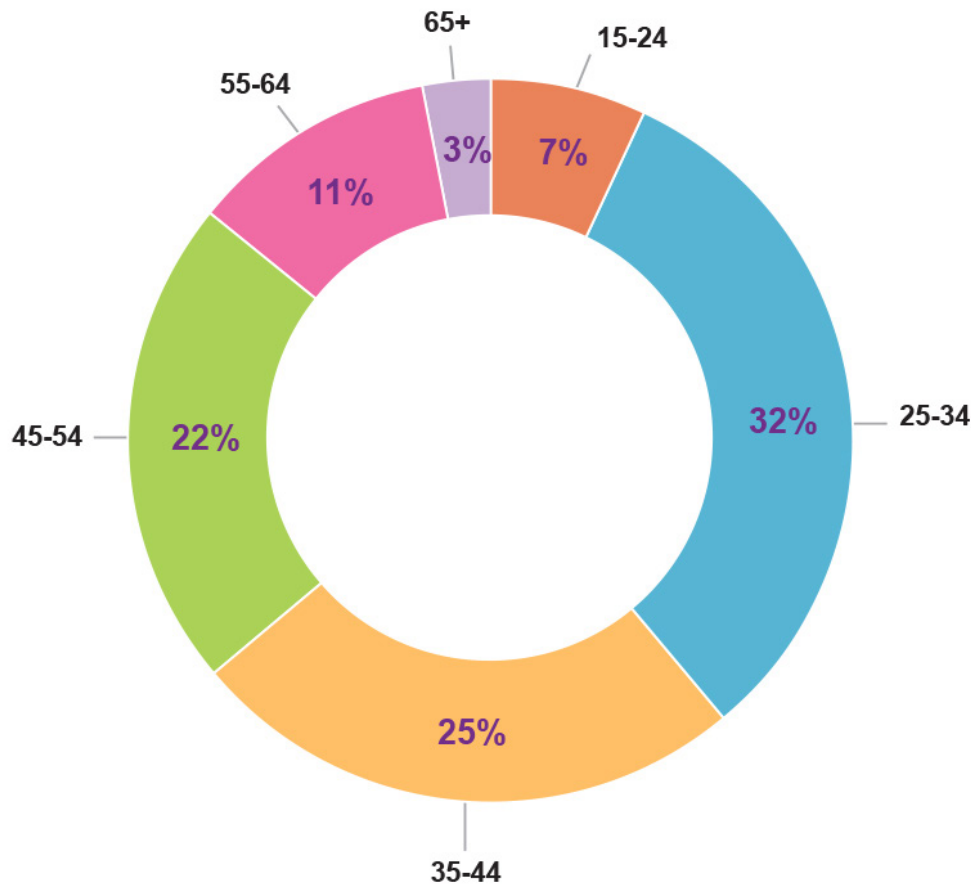
³ [Government of Ontario "Early Childhood Educators and Assistants." Ontario's Labour Market Job Profiles. Accessed July 22, 2020.](#)

The 2019–2020 fiscal year continued to see the gender distribution remain unchanged for College members, maintaining a primarily female membership at 98 per cent. The College provides members with the opportunity to identify as non-binary if they so choose; however, given the limited number of members who identified as neither gender (>one per cent), this information has been suppressed to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of personal information.

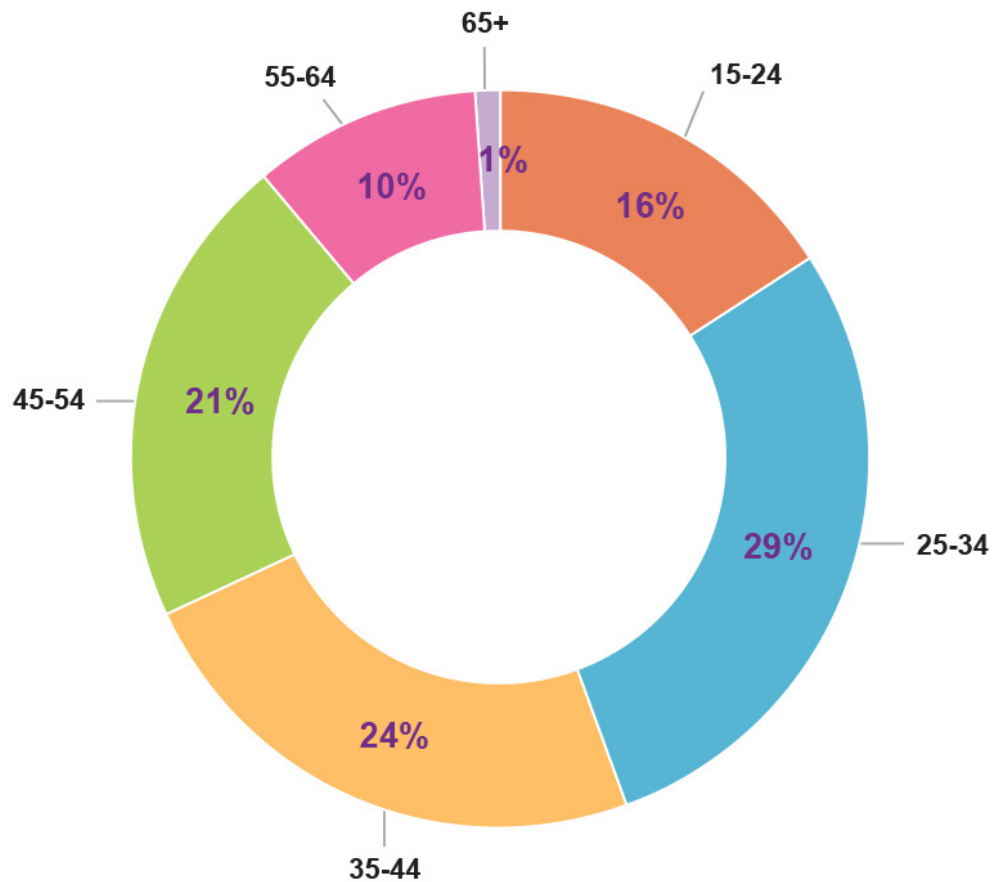
The College saw marginal changes in the age of its membership. The average age of a member was 39 years of age where the previous average was aged 40 years. The median age was 42, a change from the previous fiscal year that stood at 38 years of age. While the average and median can be close in range or the same, the median is often the preferred measure of membership age as the average age is susceptible to significant influence by statistical outliers, making it less representative of the population.

The age groupings of the College’s membership remained closely aligned with the sectoral trends, with the exception of those aged 15–24 years. This difference is likely due to the fact that the College’s data focuses exclusively on ECEs. Since individuals must complete at least a two-year ECE diploma program from a post-secondary institution before they can be registered with the College, this would suggest that applicants to the College are, at minimum, 19 years of age.

College Membership by Age Group

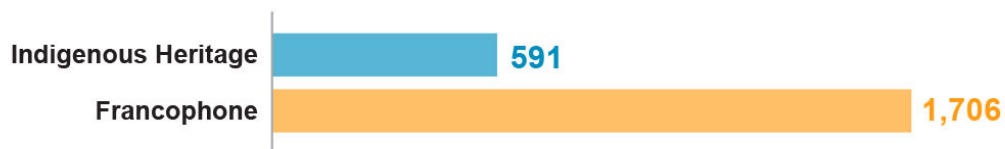


Sectoral Demographics by Age Group



The College provides members the option to self-identify as Francophone, of Indigenous Heritage or both. At the end of the 2019–2020 fiscal year, 3.9 per cent of members chose to self-identify, a fractional increase from the previous year. Of those members who chose to self-identify, 1.5 per cent indicated they identified as both Indigenous Heritage and Francophone. As this number was quite small, the specific information regarding members who identified as both has been included in the totals for those of Francophone and Indigenous Heritage, in line with data analysis best practices, to protect the identity and privacy of these members.

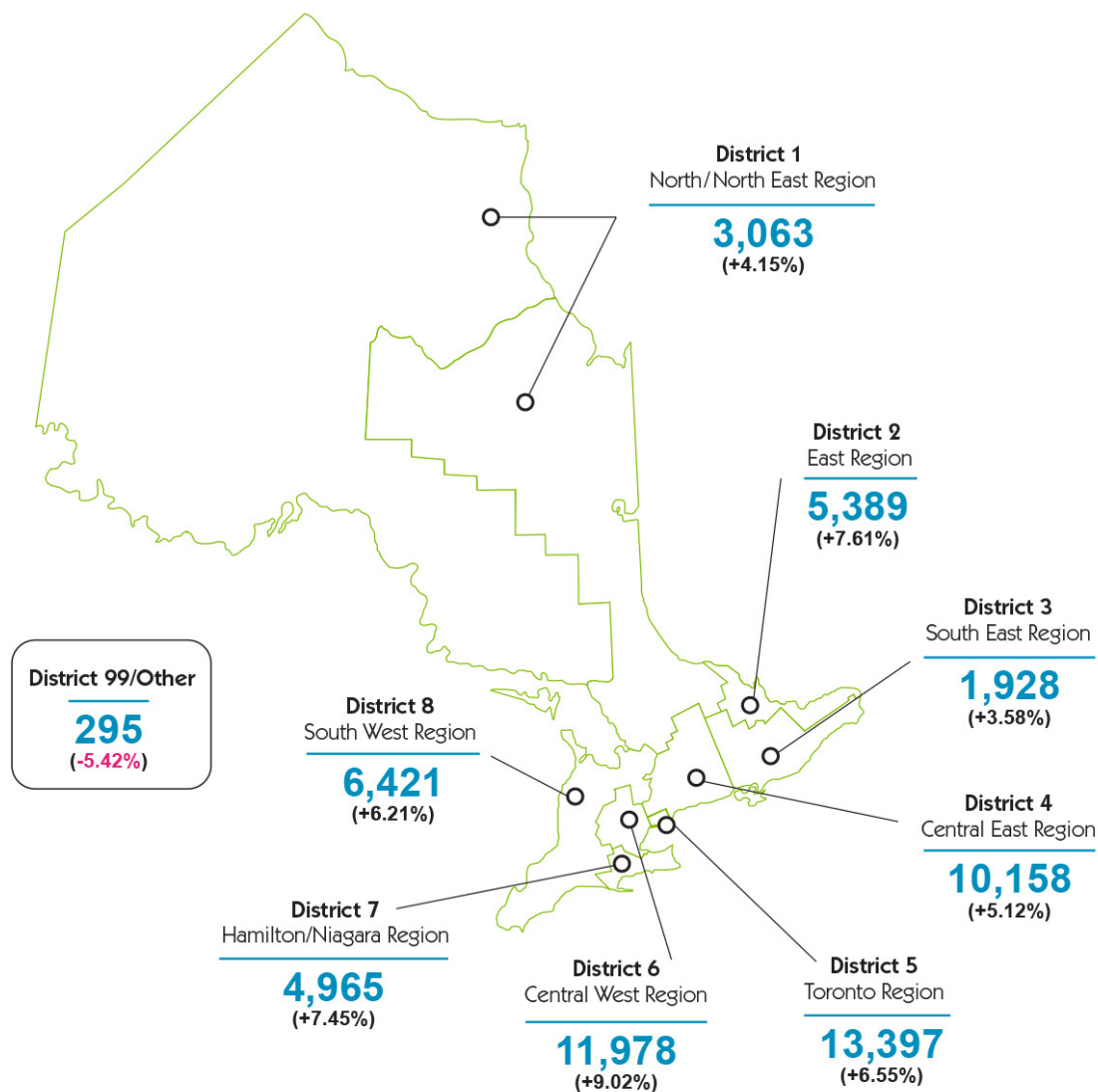
Self-Identification of Members



Geographical Distribution of Members

In light of the membership growth experienced by the College in this fiscal year, each District saw growth over the previous fiscal year, with the exception of District 99 that saw a decline. District 99 consists of members who reside outside of Ontario and account for a small percentage of the College's membership. The overall distribution of members remained unchanged, with the Toronto Region (District 5) maintaining the largest percentage of membership (23.26 per cent), followed by the Central West Region (District 6) with 20.80 per cent and the Central East Region (District 4) with 17.64 per cent. The College did not observe any statistically significant changes among members moving between districts; members overwhelmingly remained in their district, regardless of changes to employment.

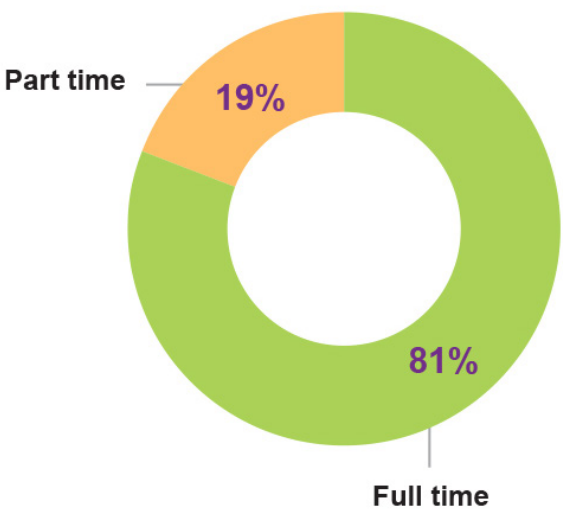
2019–2020 Fiscal Year Membership Statistics (Total Members in Good Standing: 57,594)



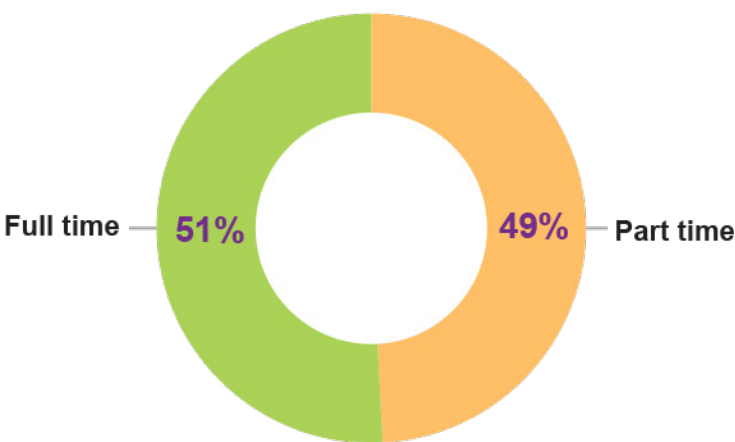
Membership Employment

College members continue to experience significantly higher rates of full-time employment over sectoral trends, with 81 per cent indicating they are employed on a full-time basis. The full-time employment rate increased two per cent over the last fiscal period, suggesting that members remain able to secure full-time employment. The unemployment rate fell to 6.8 per cent, compared to eight per cent in the previous fiscal period; however, it remained higher than the sectoral rate of 4.2 per cent. This difference in unemployment rates may be attributed to various factors, such as casual/contract and underemployment in the sector, data collection methods and differences in how the term ‘unemployed’ is defined.

Membership by Employment Status



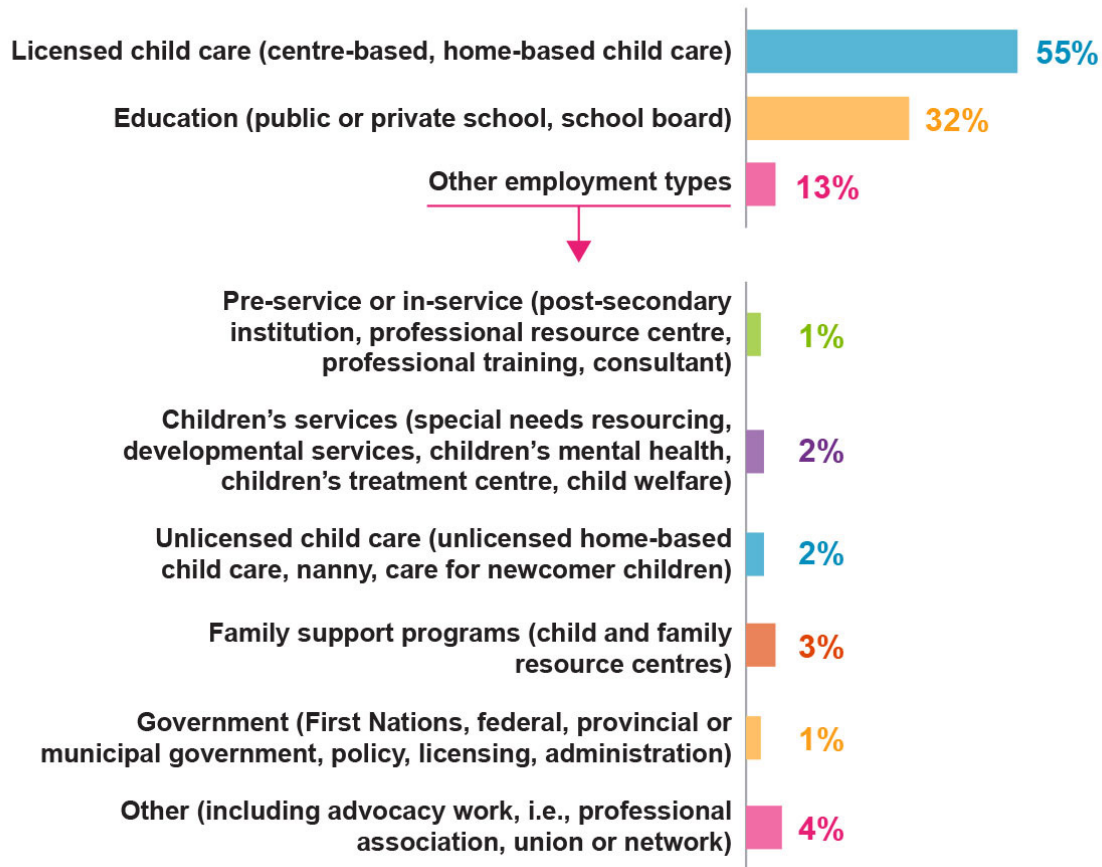
Sectoral Employment by Status



The College saw a drop in the number of members indicating they were self-employed, falling to 1.8 per cent from 5.7 per cent in the last fiscal period. This is significantly lower than the sectoral trend noted in the Ontario Labour Market information of six per cent self-employment.

The predominant employment settings among members continued to be licensed child care and the education sector, with 87 per cent of all members indicating they work at one or the other. This is a decline from the previous fiscal year, suggesting that members are finding employment in the sector outside these traditional settings, with the largest growth seen in the family support programs (child and family resource centres) setting. Members who indicated they work in family support programs increased by almost 17 per cent over the previous year. Members who reside outside of Ontario primarily indicate ‘other’ as their employment setting, which may include members who are not currently working within the profession.

Membership by Employment Type



Members are asked to indicate their employment title when completing their annual membership renewal. The College observed that members most frequently indicate “Early Childhood Educator” as their employment title, accounting for 62.8 per cent of employment titles. Just over ten per cent of members indicated they held management-level positions, with employment titles including manager, supervisor or director, while almost two per cent of members indicated they worked as a Resource Consultant or Resource Teacher.

Changes in Membership Employment

Approximately five per cent of members reported changes to their employment, including changes to their employment status and/or employment setting during the 2019–2020 fiscal year. Of the members indicating a change to their employment setting, the largest shift was seen among members leaving licensed child care for other employment settings, accounting for 15.9 per cent.

Conclusion

In 2019–2020 fiscal year, the College saw unique and unanticipated changes in its registration and membership trends.

The onset of the pandemic significantly influenced our overall membership. As a result, the College took temporary measures to support applicants and members during these unprecedented times. These included halting the suspension process, allowing extensions on the submission of application documents and providing members with the option to defer fees and CPL requirements. Because of these temporary measures as well as the timing of COVID-19 itself, the College experienced significant membership growth. We also observed changes to employment and attrition patterns that are not comparable to previous years. Therefore, we have not used them to generate conclusions about the changes and trends within the profession for now.

As Ontario continues to adjust and respond to the pandemic, the College will continue to monitor its impact on applicants and members; we will also keep a watchful eye on the registration and membership data contained in this report for future annual reporting.



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